

(a) whether export order worth crores of rupees for brass handicrafts are in jeopardy;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) to (c). It is evident from the export figures given below that the value of exports of metalware (including brassware) has gone up considerably:—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Value in Rs. crores (Provisional)</i>
1989-90	Rs. 124.73
190-91	Rs. 235.78
1991-92	Rs. 324.54

(April - Feb. 92)

Hence it is difficult to foresee that export orders for brass handicrafts worth crores of rupees may be in jeopardy.

While an increase in the import duty on copper and zinc may marginally affect the cost of production of brass handicrafts, it may be mentioned that such increase of excise/custom duty is generally compensated under the duty draw-back scheme. The exporters of metalware are at present entitled to receive duty draw-backed @ 24% of FOB value subject to a maximum of Rs. 37 per kg. w.e.f. 24.10.91.

Widening of N.H. No. 5

6987. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the widening work on the Cuttack and Bhubaneswar section of National Highway No. 5 has been delayed considerably;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken to expedite the widening work and

(d) the year by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c). Four-laning of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar Section of N.H. No. 5 in Orissa is included in the proposed Second World Bank National Highway loan. Negotiations for the loan have been completed, but the World Bank is yet to sign the loan. However, meantime preliminary actions as regards prequalification of contractors, finalisation of tender documents etc. are under way in consultation with the Bank.

(d) Since bidding process for the project has not yet started, it is too early to say when the work of four-laning will be completed.

Export of Marine Food

6988. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a vast scope for increasing marine food export;

(b) if so, the steps taken to increase the yield of marine food for export;

(c) the technology proposed to be adopted and upgraded in Eighth Five Year Plan for growth in the exports; and